

VZCZCXYZ0008
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTV #2711/01 3391238
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 041238Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9442
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEADWD/DA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/CNO WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 4691
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 1295
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 5100
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 5494
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 4715
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 3136
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 5487
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 2334
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0559
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 9286
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 6775
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 1716
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 5788
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 7770
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 0617
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 0919
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 002711

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR X0XX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

SIPDIS
E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

Mideast

Key stories in the media:

Leading media reported that DM Ehud Barak and the IDF decided to expedite preparations for the evacuation of the QHouse of Contention,Q following Tuesday's violence between settlers and Palestinians. Yesterday, amid general quiet, settlers broke into two Arab homes near the wholesale market- - the so-called Shapira House

and Vizman House -- which they had evacuated about two and a half years ago after an agreement with the state. HaQaretz reported that Barak was scheduled to meet with the Yesha Council of Jewish Settlers in the Territories today to discuss the evacuation, but he was quoted as saying that despite the last-ditch effort to postpone the house's evacuation, "we might be facing a wave of violence that could spread to the entire West Bank." Maariv and other media reported that secret negotiations have already taken place between Barak and the leaders of the House of Contention. Leading media reported that the leaders of the three major parties and Yisrael Beiteinu Chairman Avigdor Lieberman came out against hurting members of the security forces. Shas refused to join them.

HaQaretz quoted PM Ehud Olmert as saying yesterday that Palestinians in Hebron also have rights and a heritage. HaQaretz reported that senior PA officials expressed concerns that the vandalism by settlers against Muslim mosques and cemeteries could provoke a revenge attack by Palestinians. The Jerusalem Post reported that yesterday the PA called on the GOI to pull the settlers out of Hebron and that it warned that the growing tensions in the city could erupt into an all-out confrontation.

The Jerusalem Post reported that visiting Congressman Robert Wexler (D-FL), one of President-elect Barack Obama's most prominent early supporters in the Jewish community, told the newspaper yesterday that there is little doubt that Obama could work well with Likud head Benjamin Netanyahu, should the latter become Israel's next prime minister.

The Jerusalem Post reported that the IDF is drawing up options for a strike on Iranian nuclear installations that do not include coordination with the U.S. The newspaper noted that Israeli officials have said that it would be difficult, but not impossible, to launch a strike against Iran without receiving codes from the U.S. Air Force, which controls Iraqi airspace. Israel also asked for the codes in 1991 during the First Gulf War, but the U.S. refused.

Leading media reported that yesterday Knesset Member Rabbi Yitzhak Levy (National Union-National Religious Party) announced his intention to leave politics, declaring he would not run for a place on the right-wing Habayit Hayehudi (Jewish Home) party list. Israel Radio reported that today the Jewish Home will choose a leader.

Leading media reported that yesterday dozens of activists held a demonstration outside Ashkelon's Shikma prison to protest the conditions enjoyed by Palestinian prisoners there. The protesters demanded that privileges such as regular family visits be suspended as long as Hamas refused to allow the Red Cross or other officials to meet with Gilad Shalit.

The Jerusalem Post reported that a Qatari charity group announced that it, too, will send a boat to Gaza.

HaQaretz reported that Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz will ask the U.S. not to lower the flight safety rating at Ben Gurion Airport.

The Jerusalem Post reported that a new Arab party that aims to improve the daily lives of Arabs and promote Jewish-Arab dialogue in the country was officially launched yesterday. The daily quoted party leader and cofounder Sheikh Abbas Zakour (United Arab List-TaQal) as saying that Hizb al-Wasat al-Arabi (the Arab Center Party) will focus on serving the day-to-day needs of Arab citizens, rather than on international or regional issues that are beyond their mandate.

Mideast:

Summary:

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized: QThe silent majority in Israel [might receive a message from the plunderers] that the future of the Jewish Zionist state is being held hostage by [the QJewish terroristsQ] who pray for its destruction.

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized:
QNetanyahu, a student of American politics, knows that both
Democrats and Republicans have made room for non-centrist voices.

Block Quotes:

II. "Standing Up to Jewish Terrorism"

The independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz editorialized (12/4): QThis week, Israel has reached the point of no return, which will also determine who controls the state: the justice system and a government elected by democratic means, or Jewish terrorism. If the government does not remove, as soon as possible and without fear of violence, the riotous core of settlers in Hebron, which has disengaged from the state and its institutions and now endangers the public, the blood of the victims of religious fanaticism in the territories will be on its hands. No less grievous would be the message sent to the plunderers that they were victorious and proof for the silent majority in Israel that the future of the Jewish Zionist state is being held hostage by those who pray for its destruction. No other moral claim, not even the just claim of the Jewish people for a national home, will stand, either at home or abroad, against such a capitulation to terror.

II. "Let Feiglin Be Feiglin"

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (12/4): QNot unreasonably, Netanyahu is worried that allowing [far Right Likud activist Moshe] Feiglin too high a profile will send the wrong message about Likud philosophy. In our view, however, he could solve this problem by rejecting the advice of his handlers to stay vague and explicitly articulate his vision for the party.... Tactically, letting Israelis know where he stands on territorial concessions and negotiations with the Palestinians would settle the Likud's orientation. Feiglin could hardly then claim, as he does now, that he represents the Qreal LikudQ.... Netanyahu, a student of American politics, knows that both Democrats and Republicans have made room for non-centrist voices. Today's diverse GOP includes those divided over the role of government; today's Democratic Party includes those divided over social and personal values.

MORENO